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**Minutes of the Board meeting held on**  
29<sup>th</sup> January 2025

**1. Present/apologies for absence:**

- **Present:** Iain Frazer (Treasurer), Fran Hall (Vice-chair), Anne Hislop (Chair), David Howell, Sharon McMurtrie, Kayt Howell (Manager), Kirsty Murray (Project Support Officer), Jane Wild (Administration Assistant), Gordon Cowtan (Consultant), Janine Rennie (Financial Consultant).

The meeting began with Steve Luker's presentation re: Balgair which was shared to the meeting on screen.

1) Update on the biomass heating system.

The contract for the Heat Interface Units (HIUs) replacement works was awarded to Reheat in June 2024. The original quote was for £88k. Wiring issues resulted in a £13k increase (Nov/Dec 2024) and in Jan 2025 an extra £2.6k was added for new controllers and room stats (the existing controllers could not function with the new HIUs). £9k had to be added for extra project manager time as well meaning that the new (fixed) total is £112,702.84. The work which had started in mid-November was delayed by the wiring issues and was restarted on 10/01/25. Eleven HIUs have now been replaced, nine are scheduled to be done by 07/02/25 and the remaining six will be done after that (dates to be confirmed). Two of the HIUs do not need to be replaced as they had already been replaced fairly recently but they will be serviced. There was no contingency built into the original quote for extra work.

2) New park owner.

Three approaches were adopted –

- i. Engage with Largo Leisure (the current site owners). This was initiated in September 2024.
- ii. Engage with Aggregated Micro Power (AMP) (existing operator). This was done in October 2024.
- iii. Advertise to a wider set of companies within the biomass and heat network sector. This was done in November 2024.

All were told that the system has been optimised and should operate with an annual surplus of around £15k.

Outcomes:

Largo Leisure indicated that they did not wish to progress.

AMP indicated that the scheme was too small to be viable for a commercial opportunity.

Eight companies were contacted, not all replied but those that did were not interested.

3) Next steps.

- FDT will need to continue with ownership and operation for now.
- SL suggested fully restructuring the existing contract with AMP to ensure better value for money and in particular terminating the part of the contract with them regarding provision of woodchips.
- Negotiate the supplying of woodchip directly with RTS Ltd.
- Reduce the number of call-outs (via replaced HIUs, improved controls and use of Ventana – the remote site monitoring system).
- Set up less onerous arrangements for contract management and enable Scott Walker to operate as the day-to-day point of contact.
- With the use of Ventana, improved controls and the new HIUs, the system should be profitable and should operate with far less input from FDT.
- With the agreement of the Board, SL will develop new contract terms with AMP and RTS for FDT approval.
- SL was confident that the system will be profitable and that separating the fuel and running costs should save money.
- SL estimated that approximately one hour per month would be required for someone to monitor the woodchip levels and arrange for delivery. GC noted that AMP have not been particularly good at monitoring the woodchip levels anyway and that the boiler has stopped working on several occasions because it had run out of woodchip. He also noted that SW is already monitoring the woodchip levels regularly.
- SM suggested making a list of tasks that AMP currently do and approaching other companies to compare costs. SL said that he had some ideas of other companies who could take on the service and management of the system but it may depend where their engineers are based and if they

felt that Fintry was too far away. GC noted that AMP are good at maintaining the boiler and sorting out issues but agreed that it would be worth having a conversation with other companies.

4) **ACITONS:**

- SL to get a quote from RTS for woodchip and compare with AMP.
- SL to develop new contract terms with AMP and RTS for Board approval.
- SL/GC to put together a list of tasks covered by AMP.

There was a suggestion to approach Largo Leisure again but SL felt it would be better to do this in 6-12 months' time when it could be shown that the system was making a profit.

IF noted that the number of repair invoices since September has dropped considerably compared to previous years.

SL and GC are meeting on site next week.

1. **Balgair update (GC)**

GC had nothing extra to add.

2. **Apologies**

Isla Kinnear

3. **Any C.O.I. on the agenda items?**

- None

4. **Any A.O.B. items?**

- Tree damage emergency fund - KH

5. **Financial report**

a) JR/IF:

JR shared her screen. The monthly management accounts show a healthy balance. Money has been received from the turbines and interest from the bank accounts. Some grants have been given out – mostly log grants. The IT/software costs look high but this is because two payments were made in one month.

Six months into the FDT's financial year, is showing finances to be in a good position with the accounts having pretty much broken even. The biggest cost has been insurance. Repairs and renewals (Balgair) remain high. A high level of interest has been received. Overall, the organisation is asset rich and is performing well. Associated liabilities are low.

The budget document is a useful tool. It currently shows that Balgair is currently showing an overspend. Some accounts are showing an underspend but there are still things to be paid.

All is going well with the audit and there have been very few questions.

The Board felt that it would be good to look at the budgets in more detail at the next meeting so that new budgets for the coming year (in particular for grants) can be set prior to the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

**ACTION: Board to let JR know what information they would like to see in more detail at the next meeting e.g. a breakdown of how the Energy Efficiency (EE) grants have been used.**

b) Investment subgroup:

Still to meet.

c) Excuse JR:

JR was excused.

6. **Approve last minutes (27/11/24)**

- The minutes were approved.

7. **Actions from last minutes**

- a) Update reserves policy (JR/GC) - **action carried forward.**
- b) Edit STEP home working policy (KH/AH) - **action carried forward.**
- c) Reply regarding FDT support for local wood working business (AH) done. (The FDT will remain impartial).
- d) Statement re FP grants not being guaranteed each year (KH) – done.

8. **Grant update (KM)**

- KM had circulated a report prior to the meeting – there has been two EE grants. One was straightforward but KM requested a decision from the Board regarding the second one. A resident had applied for an EE grant to upgrade an oil boiler. It was agreed that this does not fit with the FDT's aims and is also against UK government policy which states that from 2025, all boilers should be replaced by eco-friendly heating systems (**I could not find any evidence of this online – only with regard to new builds**). Therefore, a grant

could not be provided for the upgrade of the oil boiler although it may be possible to fund items such as new radiators which would improve the efficiency of the system.

- KM indicated that she would be able to provide a breakdown of EE grants for the AGM.

**9. New Green Growing Grant – thoughts? (KH)**

- KM and AH had discussed this prior to the meeting. They suggested that clear parameters would need to be established and that projects would need to promote biodiversity and/or growth of food. They would also have to be new projects and not something that would normally be happening in an applicant's garden. The Board agreed and approved the green growing grants in principle.

**10. EV charger agreement with FSRC (KH)**

- The agreement had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting. KH proposed an amendment to the signage.
- It was noted that the sports centre had stated that they were going ahead with adopting the charger to provide a service to their members and not to make a profit.
- KH asked the Board to consider similar schemes in other parts of the village using the scheme at the sports centre as a trial.

**11. Strathclyde Uni (KH GC KM)**

- Students from Strathclyde University will be visiting on 19/02/25. They will be looking at three projects and the students will put together proposals beforehand. IK will help to manage things in liaison with Isaac (a PhD student). The work should generate some useful data for the FDT to use.
- The proposed projects involve looking at early adopters of renewables and in particular, things that went wrong; looking at Balgair; and developing a 'Fintry scorecard' – developing an overview tool for Fintry, looking at different scenarios and what the impact would be.

**12. Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

- a) Standing for election
  - i. AH
  - ii. FH standing down
- b) Agenda – Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> March, 6.30 p.m. – 8.30 p.m., Fintry Museum
  - i. Apologies
  - ii. Welcome by Chair
  - iii. Financial Report (IF/JR) JR may be online
  - iv. Manager's report
  - v. Project support officer's report
  - vi. Consultants' report
    - a. Steve's report
  - vii. Election of Directors
  - viii. Thank you and close
- c) Reports for leaflet required asap. Still waiting for the auditors' report.  
15 members (including the Board) are required to be quorate.

**13. Any A.O.B. items**

- There was a lot of tree damage in the recent storm and KH suggested having a budget available to assist in the replanting of trees that have been lost to storm damage. The Board agreed to consider this when they set the next budgets.
- A director asked about the communal log-splitter. **ACTION: KH to contact the people that have the log splitter and ask them to promote it.**
- Storage heaters – the split rate is stopping and many people are not aware. The cheaper rate will not exist anymore. **ACTION: FDT/EAS to put together leaflets to distribute.**

Next meetings: Board meeting – 19<sup>th</sup> February 2025 7.30 p.m.  
AGM – 5<sup>th</sup> March 2025 6.30-8.30 p.m.